Government of
Saskatchewan

Annual Report 1990-91

Saskatchewan
Parks and
Renewable
Resources

Annual Report 1990-91

For the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991

Saskatchewan Parks and Renewable Resources

Minister's Transmittal

To Her Honour, the Honourable Sylvia O. Fedoruk, OC, SOM, Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Saskatchewan

Madam:

I have the honor to submit the Annual Report of Saskatchewan Parks and Renewable Resources for the year ending March 31, 1991.

Respectfully submitted,

Darrel Cunningham

Deputy Minister's Transmittal

To the Honourable Darrel Cunningham, Minister, Saskatchewan Parks and Renewable Resources

Sir:

I respectfully submit herewith the 1990-91 annual report of Saskatchewan Parks and Renewable Resources.

Respectfully

Douglas Cressman

92-03561/

Mission and Values

Saskatchewan Parks and Renewable Resources

- We are entrusted with the care of Saskatchewan's wealth of natural resources — fish, forests, lands, parks and wildlife.
- We ensure these resources are wisely protected and managed for recreation, economic and subsistence use and sustained for future generations.
- We consult and inform the public about our plans and activities. Our service is professional, attentive and friendly.
- We fulfil government expectations reliably and manage public assets prudently.
- We work as a team. Respect and recognition govern employee relations.
- We are proud of what we do. We are innovators and leaders in our field and have a positive impact on the quality of life in Saskatchewan.

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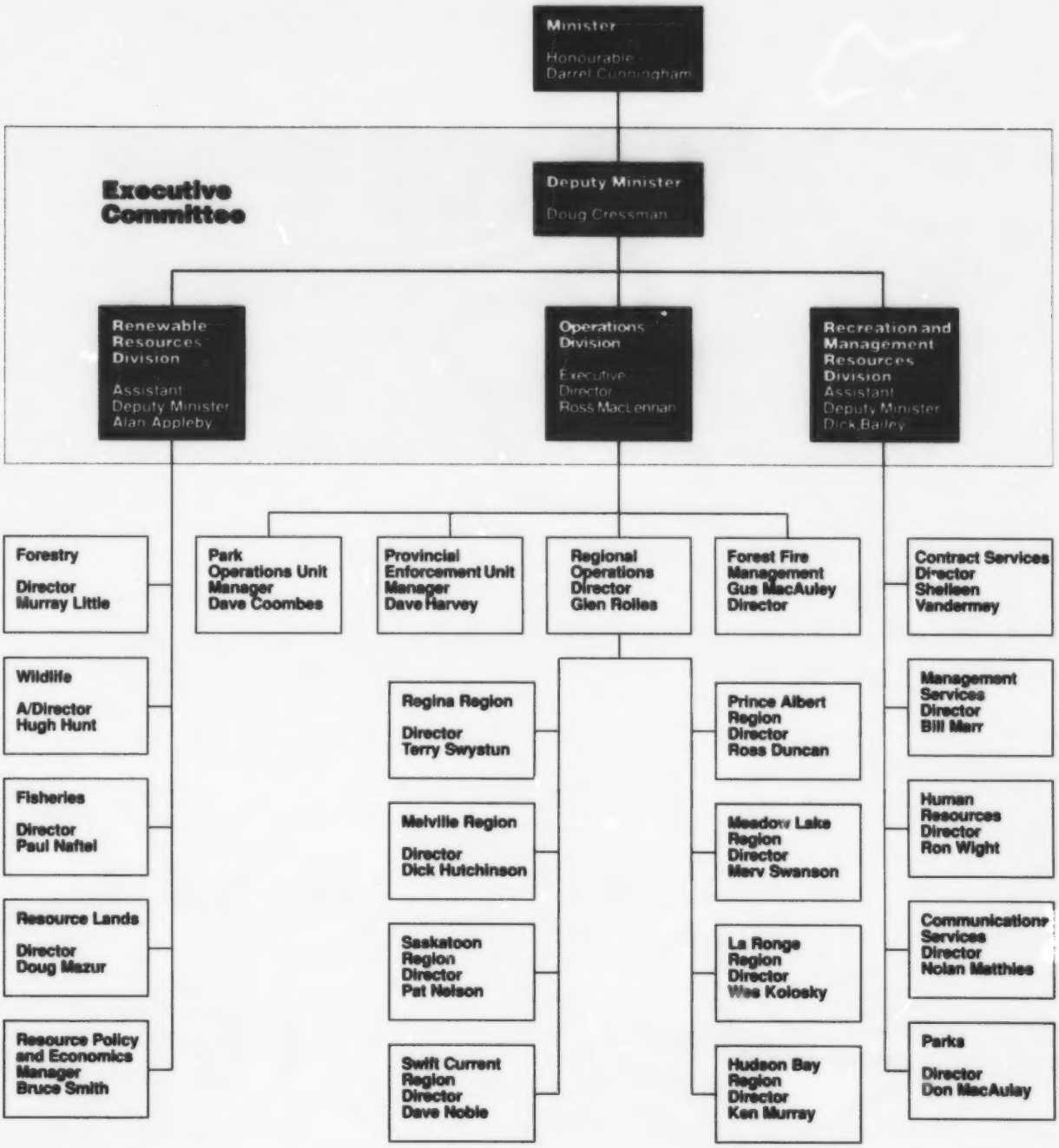
Quality Service and Resource Management - Today and for the Future

Department Organizaton



Effective as of November 1, 1991

Alan Appleby, Assistant Deputy Minister

This division, which includes Wildlife, Forestry, Fisheries and Resource Lands branches, and the Resource Policy and Economics Unit, develops and manages integrated policy and programs related to Saskatchewan's renewable resources.

Fisheries

Saskatchewan's 94,000 lakes, streams, rivers and reservoirs are home to 68 species of fish. Twenty-one of these species are economically important as they support significant components of the provincial recreation, tourism and fishing industries.

Current estimates indicate between 200,000 and 250,000 anglers fish in Saskatchewan. Approximately 400 outfitters provide services to anglers, many of whom come from outside Saskatchewan. In total, sportfishing generates more than $200 million in annual economic activity for the province.

Saskatchewan's commercial fishery supports 2,000 jobs. The annual harvest approaches three million kilograms, worth about $5 million to the primary producers.

The fisheries are also used for sustenance purposes by a broad range of people, including Treaty Indians, Metis and northern residents.

Management of the Saskatchewan fishery is the responsibility of the Fisheries Branch. Management programs include assessment, protection, enhancement and rehabilitation of fish habitat and fish populations, research, stocking, public education and the design and enforcement of fisheries regulations. Enhancement programs to increase fish stocks and broaden the range of fishing opportunities are also undertaken. The branch monitors the status and health of fish stocks, identifies economic potential in the fishery and allocates fish stocks to users for optimum benefit to Saskatchewan residents.

Planning for Fish

The department initiated a public consultation process to develop a new strategic plan for Saskatchewan fisheries. Sustainable development and co-management are its cornerstones. The direction, as outlined in *Proposed Goals, Policies and Strategies for Fisheries Management in Saskatchewan for the 1990s*, is to ensure fisheries sustainability through conservation and the involvement of stakeholders in management and allocation decisions. The department distributed more than 5,000 copies of the draft plan to users and interest groups across the province. Resulting comments will be incorporated into the final document which will define the course of fisheries management in the 1990s and beyond.

Fish Enhancement and Management

Enhancement

Operating from a special fund created by a 30 per cent impost on angling licences, the department initiated 18 fisheries projects during the year. They included:

- developing a walleye rearing pond at Thomson Lake;
- installing aeration systems at Ceylon Reservoir and Polosa Lake;
- reclaiming Althouse and Stark lakes and Hudson Bay borrow pit;
- developing trout ponds at Biggar Regional Park, Luseland, Rockglen and Saskatoon;
- stocking Atlantic salmon in Brightsand Lake;
- providing access to the Cowan River spawn camp; and
- improving habitat in Armit, Bear and Dore rivers, Hay Meadow and Scissors creeks, and Wolseley Town Reservoir.

Fourteen projects, initiated before 1990, underwent further developments, including:

- renovating Codette and Lenore walleye rearing ponds;
- installing an aeration system at Squaw Rapids borrow pit;
- improving habitat on Battle, Bone, Tobacco and White Gull creeks, Swan River and Wapella Reservoir;
- completing Buffalo and Eagle ponds;
- stocking cutthroat trout in Little Raspberry and Shirley lakes; and
- installing additional spawning reefs in Morin Lake.

The department operated and maintained 35 projects, including 10 rearing ponds and spawning marshes, 15 aeration systems and three snow removal projects to prevent winter fish kills, four catchable trout stocking ponds and three mini-hatcheries.

Since the program was initiated in 1984, a total of 103 fish enhancement projects have been developed. Volunteer organizations assisted in 64 of these projects.

Fish Stocking

The department's Fish Culture Station raised 32.5 million fish of nine species which were stocked in nearly 260 waters. The pamphlet entitled *1990*

Stocked Waters provides details of the fish stocking program. In addition, more than 120 million cisco eyed eggs were sent to South Dakota. These eggs will be used in Lake Oahe to establish a forage species for chinook salmon. The Fish Culture Station was again a popular visitor attraction in 1990-91, handling nearly 15,000 visitors.

Regional Fisheries Management

Department staff examined 136 waters during the summer to check fish populations and update fisheries management plans. The results were summarized in the pamphlet *Fish Facts 1990.* During the winter, an additional 40 waters were tested for dissolved oxygen to determine future management needs, suitability for fisheries development and forest cutting reserves.

The Qu'Appelle Walleye Nursery, located along the north bank of the Qu'Appelle River approximately seven kilometres west of Pasqua Lake, officially opened in June 1990. In its first year of operation, 160,000 walleye fingerlings were stocked into the Qu'Appelle Lakes as mitigation for lost spawning areas.

Effort was also devoted to evaluating the potential impacts of 90 new outfitting proposals and 105 commercial fishing requests.

Fish Habitat Protection

The Fish Habitat Protection Program prevents potentially harmful consequences of various development proposals on fish and fish habitat.

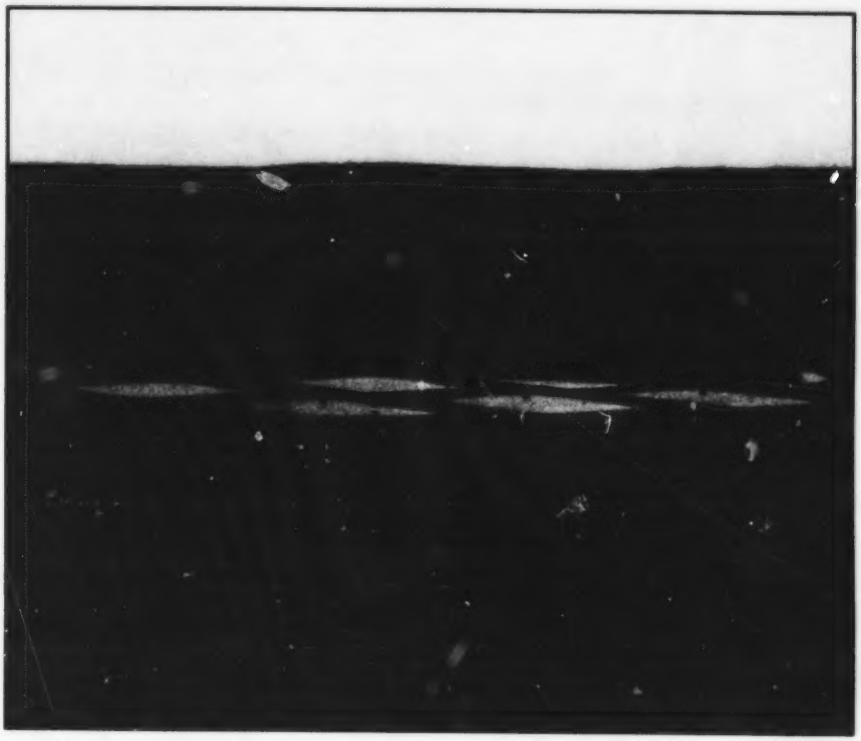
During the year, staff reviewed 15 Environmental Impact Statements, 45 major development project proposals and 83 miscellaneous development proposals.

Fisheries Research

The department completed the second field season of a two-year biological and fisheries survey on Lac La Ronge. The impact of fisheries use remains to be assessed.

An assessment of lake sturgeon in the lower Saskatchewan River and the Cumberland Lake area was completed. The population has been affected by habitat changes and loss of spawners. The present harvest is not sustainable under existing conditions. As a result, a sturgeon recovery proposal is being prepared for discussion with those whose actions impact upon the fish.

The department continues to assess walleye spawning habitat and stocking procedures. Criteria have been developed for evaluating spawning habitat relative to stream structure and flow characteristics.



Qu'Appelle Walleye Nursery, covering 2.4 hectares (six acres), is the first intensive fish production facility in Saskatchewan.

An evaluation of walleye fry versus fingerling stocking was completed using stock assessment data from Greig, Delaronde and Turtle lakes.

The northern lake monitoring program continued in 1990 with fish population assessments in Big Peter Pond, Lac Ile a la Crosse, Shagwenaw and Dipper lakes and the completion of reports on Pelican, Mirond, Jan, Hanson and Limestone lakes.

Department staff entered an extensive repository of fisheries information into data bases. Data on fish species distribution and technical information are now electronically accessible.

Sport Fisheries

Angling

The trend towards lower angling licence sales since the early 1980s continued with 164,240 angling licences sold in 1990-91. This represents a decline of about three per cent from sales in the previous three years and appears to mirror the general depressed state of the economy.

Two new programs implemented in 1990 received positive response from anglers:

- A "Catch-and-Release Award" recognized the conservation efforts of anglers who released memorable size fish. Over 700 anglers participated.
- The "Fish Photo Saskatchewan" promoted angler education. Photographs submitted were judged on their portrayal of fish conservation, angler ethics and the recreational value of sport fishing. Selected photographs will be featured in future Anglers' Guides.

"Child's Delight at Battle Creek" by Dan Danyluk of Melville, Saskatchewan, is one of the "Fish Photo Saskatchewan" entries featured in the 1991-93 Anglers' Guide.

Management Plans

A new fishing closure was implemented to protect spawning fish on Potato Lake and Potato River flowing into Lac La Ronge. Reduced limits were imposed on eight waters in the Northern Management Zone to protect fish from potential overfishing. Twenty other waters in the northern zone were added to the "High Quality Waters" program, which designates lower limits to maintain and promote fishing quality. To help preserve quality walleye, sauger and northern pike fisheries, upper size limits were implemented on Tobin Lake and the portion of the Saskatchewan River between the lake and the Francois-Finlay Dam.

Saskatchewan's second Free Fishing Day, June 9, was offered to residents and visitors to stimulate awareness of the diversity and value of angling opportunities available throughout Saskatchewan.

Commercial Fishery

Commercial Fishery Harvest

More than 2.6 million kilograms of fish were harvested in 1990. Approximately 2.2 million kilograms were exported by the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation to the United States and Europe where it commands premium prices. The remainder was sold to Saskatchewan consumers.

In response to slumping international market conditions, fishermen were encouraged to limit production of continental and cutter grade whitefish and lake trout. During the second half of the year, market conditions improved and the reduction program was cancelled at the end of the season.

The net result was a 10-per-cent reduction in whitefish catches and a 47-per-cent reduction in lake trout production. Lower fishing effort was also responsible for a slightly lower walleye harvest and a 23-per-cent reduction in pike production.

One bright spot was a slightly increased demand for rough fish such as carp, mullet and burbot. This trend is expected to continue in 1991-92.

Eighty-nine commercial bait fish fishermen harvested 11,275 kilograms of bait fish, valued at $74,502. In addition, nine brine shrimp and two fur farm fishing licences were issued in 1990-91.

Fishing Assistance

The Commercial Fishing Production Incentive Program, created in the mid-1970s to alleviate problems with low fish prices and rising transportation costs, was continued in 1990-91. In addition, the department offered price support to encourage the harvest of mullet. In 1990-91, fishermen received approximately $278,000 under this program.

Aquaculture

Interest in aquaculture, or fish farming, appears to have stabilized in Saskatchewan, although an additional hatchery and a fingerling broker joined the industry in 1990. The department issued 2,433 fish farming licences, of which 103 were commercial and 2,330 were private.

Fifteen brokers imported for resale 376,970 rainbow trout fingerlings. They imported 946,000 rainbow trout eggs for hatching and resale as fingerlings. Some diversity is now evident as arctic char, Atlantic salmon and cutthroat trout are also being cultured.

Fish farmers stocked approximately 856,000 rainbow trout fingerlings in ponds and dugouts throughout the province. Commercial fish farmers grew an estimated 45,000 kilograms of fish during the year.

Forestry

Saskatchewan's forests cover 35.5 million hectares or just over half of the province's total area. Most forested land is located in the northern part of the province and is publicly owned. The forest industry contributes almost $225 million annually to the provincial economy.

On provincial Crown lands, the forest is roughly divided into two areas by the Churchill River: the Commercial Forest Zone in the south and the Northern Reconnaissance Zone. Department activities are concentrated in the Commercial Forest Zone, where resource use is the greatest.

The role of Forestry Branch is to develop and administer programs for the management of Saskatchewan's forest resources. Effective management is undertaken through Forest Management Licence Agreements (FMLAs) negotiated with major industry, timber supply analyses, timber control, silviculture and forest inventory. The branch directs programs at optimizing economic, social and environmental benefits accruing from the forest resources for present and future citizens of Saskatchewan.

Forest Production and Control

Forest Industry Production and Employment

Direct forest industry employment, including logging, mill and office positions, totalled 2,655 person-years during 1990-91. Indirect employment, such as retail salespeople, suppliers of intermediate goods to the forest sector and government employees, amounted to 4,221 person-years.

In addition to the payment of Crown timber dues, FMLA holders are responsible for paying into and administering Reforestation Trust Funds. During 1990-91, these payments, plus interest earned, totalled $3,671,445.

Harvesting operations, including timber salvage, yielded over 2.6 million cubic metres during the year. In addition, 1.8 million cubic metres were lost to 184 major forest fires.

The value of forest products in Saskatchewan, based on selling prices, totalled more than $222 million.

Timber Control

The department analysed and approved five major forest industry operating plans and three supplementary harvesting proposals. Two five-year operating plans, required as part of FMLAs, were also studied and accepted.

The department made progress in identifying 20-year resource supply areas for small independent operators within the Weyerhaeuser Canada, L & M Wood Products and Norsask FMLA areas.

With the co-operation of the forest industry, the department continued to direct the salvage of merchantable timber from spruce budworm-damaged and fire-killed forest stands.

To help increase wildlife populations, the department continued to participate in the closure of commercial forest roads where harvest and regeneration were completed.

Two timber scaling (volume measuring) courses were presented during the year for both private sector and government employees. A study to determine how many fenceposts can be recovered from overly dense jack pine stands was also continued.

Demands on the wood flow and timber permit information retrieval systems were significant, with 47 requested retrieval projects completed. In 1990-91, 4,676 field permits for own-use wood products and 1,251 timber permits for commercial operations were issued province-wide.

During the year, the department evaluated two Environmental Impact Statements and several project proposals for the Commercial Forest Zone.

Regional Forest Operations

In the Meadow Lake Region, efforts continued toward establishing a long-term resource plan for third parties on the Norsask Forest Products FMLA. Salvage of blowdown jack pine sawtimber in Meadow Lake Provincial Park was completed.

In Prince Albert Region, salvage of fire-killed timber in the Elan, Brons, Henderson and North Cabin fires continued. In the Nisbet Provincial Forest, seven kilometres of firebreaks were completed. About 35,000 hardwood seedlings were planted in the firebreak. Regional staff supervised site preparation of 214 hectares to be planted in 1991-92. In the Fort a la Corne Provincial Forest, nearly half a million jack pine seedlings were planted.

La Ronge regional forestry staff issued many work permits for mineral exploration activities throughout the region. Staff were also involved in the review of several Environmental Impact Statements for proposed mines.

Hudson Bay regional staff authorized the harvest of 19,000 cubic metres of green softwood sawtimber by 27 different sawmill operators.

The two provincial nurseries produced 10.4 million seedlings, primarily for provincial government and forest industry reforestation projects.

Harvesting operations, including timber salvage, yielded over 2.6 million cubic metres during 1990-91.

In Cypress Hills Provincial Park, 50 hectares of overmature lodgepole pine were removed. As well, 100,000 seedlings were planted on 50 hectares of cutover.

Forestry Development

The Forestry Development Section was formed in January 1991 to co-ordinate long-term forest planning and policy functions and to develop new Forestry Branch programs.

Efforts to attract new forest industries in the Hudson Bay and Creighton regions continued in co-operation with the Crown Management Board and other agencies.

The department introduced a reforestation fee, paid by operators working outside FMLAs.

Section staff began developing policies concerning agro-forestry, co-management agreements, private woodlot management, public involvement and non-timber values of the forest.

The department, in partnership with the Saskatchewan Forestry Association, launched the TREEmendous Saskatchewan Foundation, a non-profit organization, to encourage tree planting.

Silviculture Programs

The department maintained its schedule to co-ordinate the planting of 50 million seedlings between 1988 and 1993. The forest industry contributed significantly toward this objective, as it assumed its new FMLA obligations.

The two provincial nurseries produced 10.4 million seedlings, with distribution primarily to provincial government and forest industry reforestation projects.

During the year, approximately 3.9 million seedlings were planted under eight contracts and 6.2 million seedlings were planted by the forest industry. Trees were also distributed to schools, youth groups, farm woodlots, parks and for promotional purposes.

In addition to tree planting, just over 1,400 hectares of denuded forest land were reforested naturally through use of various scarification methods, and more than 1,100 hectares of young forests were tended.

Insect and Disease Monitoring and Control

The department continued harvesting programs to reduce the impact of spruce budworm infestations.

In the southern regions, department staff conducted Dutch Elm Disease surveys, with most major urban centres checking their own elms. The disease was detected in Woodlawn Regional Park near Estevan. More than 3,000 infected and hazard trees were destroyed as a control measure.

Defoliation of aspen by the forest tent caterpillar continued over much of the Commercial Forest and northern agricultural zone.

Forest Inventory

During the year, the department continued to develop and build a computer-resident data base. Updated information was added for nearly 15,000 hectares in the central portion of the Commercial Forest Zone. A re-inventory of the Porcupine Hills area was begun and 6,000 square kilometres of aerial photography were acquired. Forest Inventory produced 6,500 square kilometres of new maps and updated 340 maps to reflect harvesting, wildfire, seismic activity and administrative changes.

The department supplied data, compilations and statistics to industry, government agencies and consulting firms. It also provided copies of 11,200 maps and 3,500 aerial photos, and loaned an additional 2,000 aerial photos.

Resource Lands

There are approximately 375,000 square kilometres of Crown resource lands amounting to approximately 53 per cent of Saskatchewan's land base. Resource Lands Branch administers the use, disposition and management of these lands in consultation with municipalities, industry, associations, interest groups, individuals and government departments and agencies.

It develops and co-ordinates plans, policies, procedures and program alternatives to allocate and manage resource lands for the continual social and economic benefit of Saskatchewan people.

In conjunction with its land administration role, the branch also administers The Outfitter and Guide Regulations and The Wild Rice Regulations and is involved in reviewing environmental studies, Metis issues, Treaty land entitlement selections, and various municipal and provincial land use studies.

Land Management

Resource Lands Branch continued the transfer of Crown land within the corporate boundaries of northern municipalities. Transfer agreements were signed with 14 communities and 458 properties were transferred. The program progressed well and further legal surveys will be carried out to describe and transfer additional lands to northern communities. In all, 23 northern hamlets, villages and towns will receive title to Crown lands within their boundaries.

The branch also continued to work on the provincial government's agreement to transfer title of 20,000 hectares of Crown land to the Cumberland House Development Corporation to help local residents improve their social, economic and employment prospects. Two parcels comprising 22 hectares were transferred in 1990-91. The transfer of an additional 2,227-hectare parcel was requested by the corporation and is under review. The branch also continued to provide advice in the selection of additional lands to meet the government's obligation to the corporation.

Involvement in northern development resulted in branch interaction with the Northern Economic Development Task Force. The branch also dealt with the Treaty Commissioner and participated in several Treaty land entitlement negotiations, including the Framework Agreement. The branch continued to co-ordinate environmental reviews and provide support for the Saskatchewan Environmental Assessment Review Commission's work on environmental legislation. The branch also participated in an interdepartmental committee charged with accessing the implications of new federal environmental legislation.

Among other department planning initiatives, a Special Management Areas Policy Item was developed for the La Ronge area.

Land Disposition and Tenure

Land uses requiring tenure rights included recreational and residential structures, industrial and institutional facilities, livestock grazing, cultivation, traditional resource use (trapping), wild rice cultivation, commercial services and resorts, mineral exploration camps, quarry and mining operations, and oil and gas production sites.

During the year, the department issued 774 outfitter and guide licences, reviewed 405 lease applications and renewals, issued 92 new leases, renewed 199 existing leases, registered 313 lease assignments, issued 43 new mineral (including oil and gas) leases, issued 49 new quarry leases, facilitated 116 land grants and 202 transfers, issued 22 agricultural permits, 391 wild rice permits and 724 miscellaneous use permits and prepared 37 Orders in Council.

As a result of the northern communities land transfers and other land sales programs, the Crown Resource Land Registry had fewer active files than in previous years. The branch maintained 7,365 files of permits, licences and leases, including files of about 2,200 recreational cottage lot leases in provincial parks.

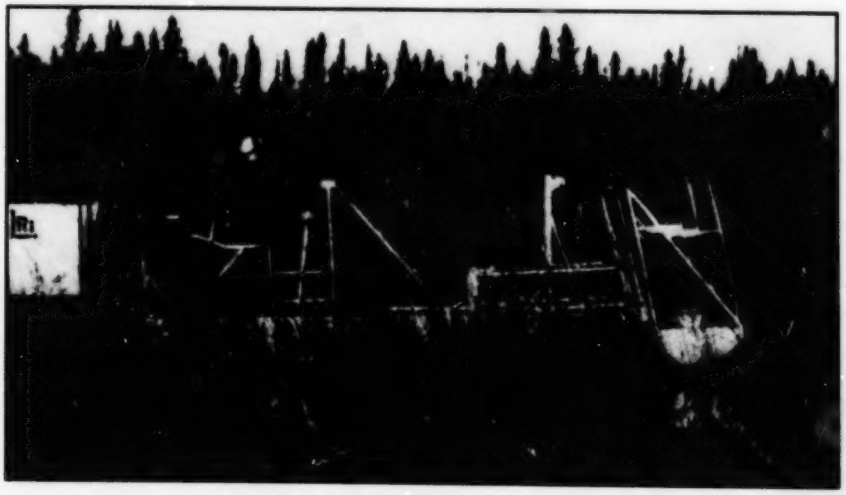
Under the Private Investment Program, the branch initiated a subdivision-resort development opportunity at Pruden's Point on Tobin Lake, where it negotiated on development scale and Crown land sale price. As well, many commercial land lease transactions and development proposals were reviewed, resulting in 15 new commercial leases.

The Crown Land Sales Program continued to provide certain lease holders with the opportunity to purchase their leased properties. During the year, Crown land sales generated $212,601. Crown resource lands rental revenues amounted to $1,936,420, including oil and gas revenues of $310,335 and mineral surface lease revenues of $878,031 from outside provincial parks. An additional $739,338 was generated from cottage lot rentals and $90,970 from oil and gas surface leases in provincial parks.

Inspections

During the year branch staff made the following inspections: 46 recreational leaseholds, 78 special site leases, 11 exploration work areas, 19 outfitting camps, 11 building sites, 26 miscellaneous work permit areas and five water-use situations.

Approximately 24,000 hectares of wetlands are being harvested for wild rice in Northern Saskatchewan.



Resource Policy and Economics

The Resource Policy and Economics Unit was formed in February 1990 to provide expertise and support for the department in areas of legislation, cabinet liaison, resource policy and sustainable development. This unit is an amalgamation of portions of the former Integrated Resource Management and Corporate Planning and Evaluation Units.

Sustainable Development

The Sustainable Development Section co-ordinates and oversees the department's involvement in sustainable development issues. During the year the section supported the minister in his capacity as member of the Saskatchewan Round Table on Environment and Economy. To this end the section provided briefing material, and prepared a report on the history and status of sustainable development in Canada. The report is called *Toward Sustainable Development: An Investigation into Canadian Conservation Strategies*. The section also researched and wrote reports for two Round Table advisory groups, Flora and Fauna and Forestry, and provided information to other advisory groups.

As well, the section prepared the department's response to *Canada's Green Plan* and wrote sections on renewable resources for Saskatchewan's *State of the Environment Report*.

Policy

The Policy Section focuses on issues, events and trends relevant to renewable resource management. The section investigated opportunities for co-management and involving stakeholders in resource management decisions, and wrote *Sustainable Development in Forestry*, a discussion paper that examines the kinds of change required to achieve sustainable forestry.

Another function of this section is to analyse department-wide pricing strategies to help establish consistent prices for the department's goods and services. Economic impact analyses were carried out for two programs: an expanded hunting licence program and a wildlife land sales program. This section also analysed lost benefits resulting from restricted access to the Primrose Air Weapons Range, and completed *An Economic Analysis of the Saskatchewan Recreational Fishery*.

Legislation

The Legislative Section is responsible for preparing an annual legislation plan, providing cabinet liaison, educating staff regarding cabinet procedures and co-ordinating all federal-provincial agreements. The section processed 159 pieces of legislation and cabinet documents during the year and worked on The Prairie and Forest Fire Act, The Fisheries Act, The Forest Act, and The Department Act.

Wildlife

Approximately 85 per cent of Saskatchewan adults make use of wildlife in some way to enhance their quality of life. They spend more than $107 million annually on recreational hunting and trapping and non-consumptive uses such as photography and bird watching.

Wildlife Branch manages the wildlife resources for the benefit and use of Saskatchewan residents. It sets hunting and trapping seasons, works to safeguard rare and endangered species, develops programs to prevent wildlife damage to agricultural produce and property, and administers the Firearm Safety/Hunter Education Program.

The branch designs and promotes programs that enhance the co-existence of wildlife and agriculture, including an increasing number of habitat conservation programs. Important wildlife lands are secured and administered by the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund.

Habitat Protection

The Critical Wildlife Habitat Protection Act (CWHPA)

The CWHPA is a unique and very important piece of wildlife conservation legislation. It currently reserves approximately 750,000 hectares of provincial Crown land from sale and major harmful alterations. No new lands were designated in 1990-91, but the CWHPA continues to be the most important and cost-effective wildlife habitat conservation program in Saskatchewan.

Fish and Wildlife Development Fund (FWDF)

The 3,658 hectares of habitat purchased in 1990 at an average cost of $274 per hectare are primarily important for white-tailed deer, but also support habitat for other game and non-game species. This brings the total FWDF land holdings to 44,922 hectares.

The department hired a FWDF land manager in 1990 to develop procedures for more intensively managing FWDF lands. These new procedures will involve local branches of the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation (SWF), other non-governmental agencies and individuals interested in developing and implementing management plans for wildlife lands.

The Wildlife Landowner Assistance Program was able to use about 460 tonnes of hay from FWDF lands to supplement its deer and elk feeding program. Another 10,200 tonnes of hay off FWDF lands were used by local area farmers on a permit basis.

Approximately seven per cent of 1990-91 FWDF expenditures were directed to promote wildlife programs. Recipients of funds were the SWF for its Wildlife Tomorrow Program, the department's Project WILD, and the Soil Conservation Program, a federal-provincial venture aimed at promoting farming practices that preserve soils.

Geographical Information System (GIS)

GIS capability in the department was expanded in 1990-91 with the purchase of GIS equipment for the

Wildlife Branch in Prince Albert and the hiring of a programmer-analyst. This will enable delivery of department services to the Saskatchewan Forest Habitat Project in partnership with Wildlife Habitat Canada, Weyerhaeuser Canada and the SWF, and provide a base for expansion of GIS technology in wildlife management.

The department purchased major data bases that cover the entire agricultural region and the forest fringe of the province. These data bases enable the department to graphically represent Critical Wildlife Habitat, Rare and Endangered Species, and Fish and Wildlife Development Fund land locations. The capability of the GIS to readily analyse the capacity of these lands to sustain wildlife will help preserve lands targeted for sale and identify lands that will require further protection.

Shelterbelts

The department provided funding and technical assistance to qualifying landowners in 85 rural municipalities who wished to establish shelterbelts or block plantings designed to benefit agriculture and wildlife. Approximately 105 kilometres of wildlife shelterbelts and 294 hectares of block plantings or abandoned farmyard enhancements were recruited under the program.

Wildlife Education and Research

Woodland Caribou Study

Woodland caribou populations have been declining across Canada since the 1970s. The western race of the species, which occurs in northern Saskatchewan, is now considered rare or vulnerable and all sport hunting seasons for woodland caribou have been closed since 1987. A study to determine woodland caribou population status in Saskatchewan and to develop a management plan was undertaken in early 1990, with the plan targeted for mid-1991.

Wildlife-Based Ecotourism

The desire to experience and observe nature, and wildlife in particular, has led to a rapid increase in "ecotourism" world-wide. Saskatchewan, with its large populations of waterfowl and big game, as well as a number of readily observed threatened or endangered species, could provide a suitable destination for wildlife viewing and nature study.

A preliminary survey of potential wildlife attractions was completed and passed on to tour promoters to test their value. In addition, the department began a program to improve availability of information to the general public about wildlife viewing opportunities. This includes publication of a wildlife viewing guide and advice to communities and interested groups wishing to use local wildlife to attract and hold tourists.

Wayne Runge, wildlife biologist presents "Furever" a component of the Project *WILD* program, to grade three and four students in Foam Lake.

Firearm Safety/Hunter Education

Initiated in 1960, the Firearm Safety/Hunter Education program has graduated over 120,000 students in 30 years. From 106 firearm accidents reported in 1960, the number has dropped to 26 in 1990. In 1990 the program continued to be popular, with 163 new instructors trained and a total of 3,492 students graduated. A new Firearm Safety/Hunter Education brochure was prepared to supplement the student manual and publicize the program.

Urban Wildlife

The department conducted a research study in 1990 to examine the importance, nature and extent of urban wildlife-related activities among different socio-demographic groups of Regina. Current and past wildlife management efforts have focused primarily on hunting and trapping activities in rural Saskatchewan. But a shift from rural to urban population distribution and increased wildlife interests by urban residents indicated a need to identify urban client needs, attitudes and interest towards wildlife. Results of the study will provide the framework for urban wildlife conservation and planning measures.

Project WILD

The use of Project WILD increased as an interdisciplinary supplementary environmental and conservation education program in schools, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and 4-H programs. More than 2,100 educators were trained to use the program in the

1990-91 school year, bringing the five-year total to over 80 per cent of all primary teachers in the province.

The introductory Project WILD program sparked considerable interest in teachers and students alike to become involved in hands-on conservation projects such as Saskatchewan Water Watch, Habitat 2000 projects and community programs to protect and clean up the environment.

Plans are being developed to use Project WILD as a basis for a number of other educational programs such as Save Our Soils, Preventative Renewable Resource Enforcement, Focus on Forests and in developing a supplementary manual for an Indian conservation education program.

The Caribou Schools Kit reference guide was completed and accepted for use in northern schools by the educational system. The "Furever" wild fur resource education kit was well received and used to expose over 1,000 students to the history and value of the fur industry in Canada.

National Wildlife Week was again successful, particularly in Regina and Saskatoon. Schools and individuals requested more than 7,000 National Wildlife Week/Habitat 2000 kits.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The department again worked with World Wildlife Fund using the $300,000 Saskatchewan Endangered Species Fund (SESF) to stimulate a series of projects helping the conservation of threatened and endangered species. At the request of RENEW (Recovery of Nationally Endangered Wildlife) the department began to prepare national recovery plans for the greater prairie chicken and black-footed ferret, both of which no longer exist in the wild in Canada.

The three-year program to determine the feasibility of re-introducing the swift fox to Saskatchewan continued with good success. Fifty-one swift fox were released at a new release site near Mankota during September 1990. Radio monitoring indicated that at least 50 per cent of the foxes were still alive in February and appeared to be adapting well to the new environment. This, coupled with evidence of successful reproduction and survival in the wild by swift fox along the Alberta-Saskatchewan border, provides optimism for the eventual re-establishment of this species.

Through the SESF the department continued to sponsor the study of Regina area burrowing owl population dynamics. The study indicates a continuing decline across the eastern part of this threatened species' range.

The department identified all known ferruginous hawk nest sites to ensure protection of nesting areas on Crown lands. In co-operation with the Saskatchewan Natural History Society, 13 nest platforms were erected for this threatened species in areas where previous nest trees had fallen due to age, drought and rubbing by cattle.

The burrowing owl population continues to decline in the Regina area in 1990-91.

Wildlife Depredation

Big Game Depredation

Although big game damage claims overall were down from last year (410 in 1990-91 compared to 505 in 1989-90), big game populations, especially in the southwest, continued to rise resulting in 260 summer damage claims and increased complaints. Claims were less this year because the mild winter helped reduce winter haystack damage.

Relatively low bear populations resulted in low bear damage complaints, only a few beehive damage complaints and livestock losses, compared to 1989.

Predator Damage

Wolf damage complaints continued to increase with most livestock losses reported along the forest fringe in the Prince Albert and Meadow Lake regions. Wolf damage complaints were handled on a case-by-case basis. Where necessary, the department provided assistance in removing the problem wolves.

Due to the increased coyote and fox populations and the resulting increased coyote damage complaints, the southern coyote and fox seasons were extended to nine months from 3.5 months to encourage more harvest of these species.

Waterfowl Depredation

Although crops were somewhat delayed from normal at the outset, ideal harvest weather resulted in earlier than average harvest in all areas. This resulted in minimal waterfowl damage complaints. In the chronic high damage areas the department operated about 1,900 hectares of permanent lure crop and 17 waterfowl feeding stations to assist in keeping waterfowl off the farmers' fields.

Wild Fur Management

World fur prices continued to remain low, resulting in continued reduced fur trapping activity. This year, 4,565 trappers purchased fur licences, compared to 6,500 last year and 15,000 normally. The annual fur sales were $795,402, compared to $1.3 million last year and the $5-million long-term average.

Even though fur prices were low, a larger volume of furs was sold than in recent years. This significantly reduced the surplus hold-over fur on the market, and year-end fur prices for several species showed some increase. This suggests that the fur prices have bottomed-out and some fur price improvement can be expected for next year.

Game Management and Licensing

Big Game

Big game populations continued to increase as did damage complaints. The department studied options to manage the game populations at levels that could help control the damage. These options, designed to encourage sport hunters and landowners to work together to control big game populations, will be implemented in 1991-92.

White-tailed Deer

Licence sales of 52,162 for 1990 were similar to 1989, with good hunter success reported. Deer populations in all areas of the province continued to increase in response to another mild winter. White-tailed deer are the most popular big game species hunted, making up 55 per cent of licence sales.

Mule Deer

Mule deer populations continue to grow. In response, the department increased the mule deer licence quotas by 28 per cent to 14,647. Hunting weather was good and hunter success remained high at an estimated 12,000 animals.

Moose

A total of 11,936 moose licences was sold and hunter success was near normal. However, the early special moose season, which was moved one week away from the rut (breeding season), resulted in lower hunter success during that season. Surveys showed that the moose population in most areas is stable or slightly increasing — good news for future years.

Elk

Elk populations around the province continue to expand, resulting in more areas opened up to special elk seasons. Overall 4,653 elk licences were sold, up 18.5 per cent from last year. Demand for special season elk licences remained high, with over 9,000 applications received for the 1,764 licences issued through the big game draw.

The department opened the first-ever archery elk season, which accommodated 231 hunters. Seventeen elk were taken and the archers were very pleased with this new hunting opportunity.

Abundant elk populations in the province allowed for increased licence sales of eighteen per cent from 1989-90.

Antelope

Antelope populations continued to expand with herds established in more northerly locations than the traditionally recognized antelope range. A total of 6,400 rifle and 450 archery licences was allocated, 25 per cent more than in 1989. Hunter success appeared good with many trophy animals taken.

Black Bear

Black bear populations remained low but appear to be stabilizing. To assist the bear population recovery, second bear licences were not sold for the second year in a row. Total bear licence sales dropped 10 per cent to 3,442 with hunter success believed to be similar to recent years.

Game Birds

Upland Game Birds

Game bird licence sales dropped nine per cent to 26,827, indicating the poorer than average upland game bird and duck populations. Drought and resulting habitat limitations are believed to be adversely affecting upland game bird populations in southern Saskatchewan, where most of the hunting takes place.

Waterfowl

With duck populations at very low levels, bag limit restrictions were in place to control duck harvests for mallards, pintails and canvasbacks. The 22,964 sport hunters with waterfowl permits harvested 115,937 ducks.

Goose hunting continued to be the bright spot on the waterfowl hunting scene with good goose populations reported and a total of 161,686 geese taken.

Hunters harvested 3,822 sandhill cranes, up 65 per cent from 1989 and seven per cent above the long-term average.

Ross MacLennan,
Executive Director

Operations Division delivers the department's programs to the public. These programs encompass fisheries, forestry, resource lands, wildlife and parks. Division staff ensure that legislation and regulations governing all department programs are adhered to and, where necessary, enforced.

Eight regional offices carry out Operations Division activities throughout the province. Offices are located in Saskatoon, Melville, Regina, Swift Current, Hudson Bay, Meadow Lake and La Ronge, and in 59 districts. In addition, the department operates the Echo Valley Conference Centre at Fort San, the Forest Fire Management Branch in Prince Albert and the Park Operations Unit in Regina and Saskatoon. The Provincial Enforcement Unit in Regina provides co-ordination and leadership for enforcement needs.

Operations Division operates, manages and maintains all provincial parks, recreation sites, picnic sites and campgrounds. These activities include constructing and maintaining facilities, maintaining and enhancing park grounds, providing provincial park security, operating recreation facilities such as swimming pools, and providing visitor information, interpretive, recreation and aquatic programs. Winter activities include cross-country ski and snowmobile trail construction and maintenance. The Park Operations Unit provides administrative, maintenance and customer service, policy development and direction.

Forest Fire Management Branch centrally administers all aspects of fire activity. The branch develops and directs fire management and policy, contracts aircraft, supplies equipment, provides technical fire and weather services, and delivers fire suppression training. As well, the branch gives direction and dispatch for aircraft, equipment, specialized fire fighters and other technical services. Regional offices recruit and supervise basic forces necessary to put out fires.

The division concentrates wildlife activities on resource law enforcement, with emphasis on poaching, illegal trafficking and night hunting. Staff assist landowners with wildlife damage prevention and help with wildlife surveys and nuisance wildlife control. Regional staff also enforce wildlife habitat protection and federal migratory bird laws.

Delivering fisheries programs involves enforcement of sport, commercial and domestic fishing regulations, with an increased emphasis on illegal trafficking and use of small mesh nets. Other fisheries work includes stocking and monitoring waterbodies, inspecting and enforcing fish habitat and shoreline developments and developing fish enhancement projects.

Resource land use activities include monitoring, regulating and enforcing fish and wildlife outfitters and guides with an emphasis on illegal outfitting, and trophy hunting and fishing.

Work related to forestry and other Crown resource land uses includes issuing land use leases and permits for activities such as grazing, forest resource use, wild rice harvesting, and surface mining such as gravel and stone quarrying and mineral exploration. Regional staff undertake a variety of forestry and land use inspections to ensure compliance with the province's laws and regulations.

Enforcement Operations

Poaching and Trafficking Investigation

During the year, the Enforcement Unit's special investigators worked with several enforcement agencies from other provinces, several states and international agencies to solve a number of landmark trafficking and poaching cases. Many of these cases are still before the courts, but those that have been completed resulted in unprecedented numbers and severity of charges in both Canada and the United States.

A number of other jurisdictions are looking at Saskatchewan's Enforcement Unit as a model for developing similar branches in their agencies. The successes of the past few years in apprehending and prosecuting poachers and traffickers has raised the unit's profile and generated greater public awareness of the threat the illegal trade is having on Saskatchewan's fish and wildlife resources. This is being shown by the steadily increasing numbers of public calls through the TIP Program.

Turn in Poachers (TIP) Program

The TIP Program provides a 24-hour, toll-free telephone service for anyone to contact a conservation officer. Increasing public co-operation resulted in a record 1,387 calls in 1990-91 and an increase in the discovery and prosecution of hunting and fishing violators. TIP calls resulted in conservation officers investigating 853 incidents that resulted in 192 charges. Since it began in September 1988, the TIP Program has handled more than 5,000 calls.

Enforcement Training

During the year, 240 officers received 1,084 person-days of specialized resource law enforcement training. The courses centred on officer safety, public awareness, liaison and co-operation with groups and enhanced legal and human relations skills. Courses included expert firearm handling, safe high-speed driving, boating, hostility intervention and cross-cultural training.

Wildlife Enforcement

This year, conservation officers contacted 34,321 hunters and 1,293 trappers in the field and there were 987 wildlife-related convictions. Of the convictions, 44 were related to illegal night hunting and five for trafficking in wildlife. Judges levied record fines in six of the cases.

Fisheries Enforcement

In 1990-91, conservation officers contacted 51,643 anglers in the field and 805 sport fisheries-related convictions were made.

In the continuing effort to alleviate illegal use of small mesh gill nets in the northern commercial fishery, conservation officers checked 1,649 commercial nets and 709 domestic nets, resulting in the seizure of 91 illegal small mesh nets.

Land Use Inspections

During the year, department staff inspected 297 recreational leases, 374 surface leases, 199 oil sites and 201 exploration work areas. Inspections also included 521 outfitting camps, 196 building sites, 178 multiple use permit areas and 501 water users.

Park Operations

Risk Management

During the year, the Park Operations Unit strengthened its role in managing both maintenance and risk-liability in provincial parks, campgrounds and recreation sites. The unit developed a Risk Management Strategy and implemented recommendations to increase park visitor safety and decrease the potential for accidents on park lands.

Customer Service

The Park Operations Unit developed and directed new customer service standards and provided expanded customer service training to all seasonal department park staff as well as to employees of leased facilities. This "customer first" initiative proved to be very successful in providing visitors with an atmosphere of customer satisfaction for a more relaxed, enjoyable and comfortable park experience.

Visitor Comment Card

During 1990 the visitor comment card feedback program continued to operate throughout the provincial park system. An increased response of 2,228 cards this year indicated that park users are willing to offer suggestions. The results confirm that visitors continue to rate most areas as "very good."

Park Security

Park security continued to be major factor in providing visitors with a relaxed, safe and enjoyable stay in provincial parks.

In 1990, park officers evicted 651 people and gave 1,109 violation notices to people who disturbed the peace and enjoyment of park patrons, compared to 556 evictions and 562 violation notices in 1989-90. Convictions resulting from Parks Act violations totalled 346 in 1990 compared to 394 the previous year.

In this third year that park officers have had the mandate to enforce The Alcohol Control Act there were 491 convictions for infractions, compared to 242 last year.

Echo Valley Conference Centre

During the year, Echo Valley Conference Centre hosted 220 groups ranging in size from 12 to 266 people. The conference facility provided 11,054 bed nights and served 38,593 meals.

In 1990 the department completed sewage treatment plant renovations at the centre. James Hall, the main large-volume meeting area, was renovated and refurbished, complete with new carpeting.

Forest Fire Prevention and Suppression

1990 Fire Season

1990 was another busy season for forest fires. Although the total number of fires decreased to 897 from the previous two seasons' highs of over 1,000 fires, 187,350 hectares of forest cover were lost. About 37 per cent of the area destroyed by fire was in the primary protection zone and the remainder, in the secondary protection area. Even with this significant burn area, only 38,760 hectares were potential merchantable timber compared to 157,000 the previous year. Suppression costs for the year totalled $32.5 million.

Fire conditions, though steady and moderate most of the season, became extreme during August. The northwest side of the province had the most severe fires, and an exceptional effort by department staff resulted in successes in the protection of human life and livelihood, communities, commercial property, commercial timber and critical habitat.

Excellent work by the air tanker fleet of three Canso, four CL215 water bombers and six Grumman Trackers, supported by a number of privately-owned helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft, significantly reduced losses from forest fires. All helicopters were under general management of the department's helicopter co-ordinator, who received the Canadian Aviation Safety Award of Excellence for his outstanding efforts in 1990.

Although 1990 was a successful year for suppression, it was not a year without tragedy. In August 1990, a helicopter crash at a fire near Turnor Lake claimed the life of conservation officer Murray Lewis Doell.

New Forest Fire Management Complex

On October 22, 1990 the premier and minister officially opened the new Nisbet Forest Fire Management Complex in Prince Albert. This facility serves as the centralized maintenance, storage and equipment depot for forest fire suppression activities in the province as well as storage for other branches.

New Fire Suppression Initiatives

In 1990 a number of new initiatives in the forest fire suppression program provided for containment of spiralling costs and for enhanced fire fighter safety. They included a reactive priority system to commit funds based on values at risk, updating and improving weather prediction and fire behavior technologies, addition of forest fire co-ordinators in the Prince Albert and Hudson Bay regions, and improvements and progress to the Intelligent Fire Management Information decision support system.

In addition, the Forest Fire Management Branch developed an escape fire analysis policy to assist with decision making in major fires. This system compares the value of specific sites with the risks and costs of suppression. The branch also piloted a new project for handling aviation fuel, which resulted in substantial savings.

Fire Fighter Training

Fire fighter and fire manager training continued to be emphasized in 1990, with 927 people receiving basic, medium and highly specialized training.

Forest Fire Prevention Awareness

Smokey Bear met 34,000 people and promoted forest fire prevention at schools, community meetings, parades and various other functions throughout the province. As well, the branch developed a video to accompany Smokey on his travels. Another video about fire suppression was produced to use in the Urban Wildlife Interface Program, a co-operative program between the department and cities and towns.

Dick Bailey, Assistant Deputy Minister

This division provides park policy, planning and operating support through the Parks Branch. It also includes four branches responsible for a broad array of support service functions: Contract Services, Management Services, Human Resources and Communications Services.

Parks

The department is responsible for Saskatchewan's park lands, including 31 provincial parks, 21 protected areas, eight historic sites and 152 recreation sites, down from 165. Support funding and consultation are provided to 101 regional park authorities. (The four urban park authorities were also under the department's jurisdiction until January 2, 1991 when the responsibility was transferred to Saskatchewan Community Services.) In 1990, approximately 3.8 million people visited Saskatchewan's provincial parks, regional parks and recreation sites.

Parks Branch is responsible for the establishment and planning of provincial and regional parks, recreation sites and protected areas. It is also responsible for integrating provincial and departmental park concerns, developing new park policy and programs and evaluating park program effectiveness.

Through co-operation with commercial operators and its visitor programs, Parks Branch helps visitors enjoy the full recreational, interpretive and educational potential of the provincial parks system. In addition, the department protects and manages the significant resources found in Saskatchewan's park lands.

Park Development

Facility Planning

A five-year capital budget forecast was updated and compiled for all the department's parks and recreation-related projects. The branch also prepared two-year budget priorities to guide capital requests. These documents guide immediate priorities as well as long-term public and private capital expenditures.

Planning and design for new and improved park facilities included upgrading the marina at Greenwater Lake Provincial Park and an access trail to the Nipekamew Sand Cliffs Protected Area.

The department undertook a major review and rationalization of the Recreation Sites System to reduce operating costs and determine the long-term needs of recreation sites in the province. The review resulted in 19 recreation sites being sold or transferred to municipalities and Saskatchewan Highways and Transportation, and a number of other areas leased to communities or the private sector.

Locations and conditions were determined for a variety of private commercial developments on park lands, among them a golf course clubhouse at Makwa Lake Provincial Park.

The department provided advice and assistance on several planning issues. Recommendations were provided for vegetation management in plantations in several southern provincial parks, including Rowan's Ravine and Buffalo Pound. A document introducing an approach to architectural themes for provincial parks was approved. Technical development assistance was provided to several regional parks.

Regional Park Management Specialist

In an effort to increase support to the parks system, new Park Management Specialists were appointed for Meadow Lake and Saskatoon regions.

Park Management

Park Management Strategies

Development of park management strategies is a joint initiative between staff from Parks Branch and Operations Division. Of the 21 park management strategies being developed, 10 were completed: Buffalo Pound, Danielson, Lac La Ronge, Last Mountain House, Moose Mountain, Nipawin, Pike Lake, Saskatchewan Landing, Meadow Lake and Candle Lake.

Resource Management

The branch's resource management unit continued to co-ordinate a variety of natural resource management activities affecting parks. They included:

- a survey of resource management needs;
- the leafy spurge project at Last Mountain House;
- a resource use policy and application form;
- a review of environmental impact assessment for gold mining in Lac La Ronge Provincial Park; and
- a vegetation management slide-tape presentation.

The preparation of vegetation management plans for Douglas and Moose Mountain provincial parks remained a priority.

Legislation

Staff undertook a major re-write of The Parks Act Regulations, resulting in a number of long-standing issues being resolved and clarified. The new regulations will assist in a more efficient management and operation of Saskatchewan's park lands system.

Parks System Planning

The new Parks System Plan was officially announced by the minister on December 5, 1990. The World Wildlife Fund welcomed the announcement as Saskatchewan became only the third province to announce such a plan. After the announcement,

Saskatchewan Express, performed in six provincial parks to over 4,000 park patrons.

the department held a number of public information meetings and made presentations on the Parks System Plan, including one to the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation annual conference in Moose Jaw. Public meetings will continue into next year at the invitation of interest groups.

Athabasca Sand Dunes Park Land Reserve

Public information meetings to discuss future boundaries, designation and management of this 1,940-square-kilometre park land reserve were held in four northern communities in October. Other meetings are planned for the south in 1991-92.

Canadian Heritage Rivers System

Saskatchewan continued to serve on the Canadian Heritage Rivers System Board. The department started a study of potential Canadian Heritage Rivers System candidate rivers in Saskatchewan.

Grasslands National Park

The department continued its role as the primary provincial liaison with the Canadian Parks Service regarding the 1988 Grasslands National Park Agreement. Nearly 350 square kilometres within the proposed park area have been acquired to date, comprising 38 per cent of the total park area. Legal descriptions were prepared to define water courses under Saskatchewan's Parks Act.

Policy, Marketing and Research

Park Visitor Survey

During the 1990 summer season, the department carried out a visitor survey across the parks system. Just over 31,000 surveys were distributed, resulting in a good return rate of 15 per cent.

Some of the more significant findings were that 78 per cent of park visitors are Saskatchewan residents and 70 per cent, repeat visitors. Two-thirds of users travel less than three hours to reach their park of choice. The typical visitor party spends $325 per visit to a park. Visitor expenditures alone amount to over $7.4 million a year. Survey results will be further analysed to provide direction to park management, development and marketing efforts.

Marketing

The department prepared a draft park marketing framework. This work provides a broad context for park-related promotion and information-spreading efforts. The strategy is concerned with visitor satisfaction, public awareness, pricing and matching appropriate activities with market groups. Future marketing will focus on the features that contribute to a special experience at each park.

SASKATCHEWAN PARKS
YOUR PLACE
Under the Sun

Ken Lozinsky, Manager, Park Management and Development and Wayne Schick, Park Management Specialist discuss the Park System Plan announced December 1990.

Visitation

More than 3.7 million visitors entered the park system during the 1990 summer season. Based on the traffic counter data collected, the system witnessed a drop of 28.5 per cent over the previous year (see Table 7). This figure is not consistent with entry permit records, camping permit sales and revenue figures, which showed much the same visitation as previous years. After analysis, the department concluded that overall park system visitations increased by 1.0 per cent.

Park Programs

Visitor Programs

Park visitor programs included swimming lessons, lifeguarding at pools, historic and nature interpretation, interpretive brochures, visitor centre exhibits and nature trail preparation.

During 1990-91:

- 3,894 participated in swimming lessons;
- 37,213 swimming pool admissions were sold;
- 29,362 people, of which 19 per cent were students, attended historic park programs;
- 82,090 people, of which 17 per cent were students, attended natural and outdoor recreation programs; and
- 67,632 people viewed visitor centre exhibits in recreation and natural environment parks.

Saskatchewan helped celebrate the first Canada-wide Parks Day on June 9.

The Fort Carlton Visitor Centre officially opened June 21, 1990. Construction and installation of visitor centre exhibits at Saskatchewan Landing Provincial Park were completed.

The "Gift of Green" trail at Pike Lake Provincial Park was officially opened, and construction was completed on the Highland Interpretive Trail at Cypress Hills Provincial Park. More than 75 brochures were reprinted, and 18 canoe route brochures were updated with the assistance of canoe clubs.

Saskatchewan Express performed and was enthusiastically received by visitors at four provincial parks.

The National Junior Naturalist Proposal submitted by the department to the Federal-Provincial Parks Council was accepted. Saskatchewan has been invited to chair the council's national standing committee.

Regional Parks

Saskatchewan's 101 regional parks play a major role in providing recreational opportunities for rural residents as well as tourists travelling in the province.

Regional parks are owned by the local municipalities and managed by authorities of appointed volunteers. The department contributes approximately $2.4 million annually in capital and maintenance grant assistance to the regional parks. In addition, department staff provide administrative and technical advice to the authorities and the Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association.

Regional parks continued their trend toward providing a better standard of facilities and services. The effect of this trend is reflected in their increased revenues. More than $8 million in direct revenues was generated by regional parks in 1990-91.

Collectively the regional parks boast a variety of facilities, including 31 swimming pools, seven ski hills and 72 golf courses. Most have camping, picnicking and boating facilities.

Contract Services

Contract Services Branch provides the detailed design, engineering and construction of buildings, services and facilities among its services to the department. The branch also administers the department's radio communications and develops and manages the department's capital budget.

The branch provides contract administration services to ensure compliance with standards and the orderly processing of contracts. A significant part of the branch's responsibility includes development and leasing of services and facilities in the park system.

Capital Development Program

In 1990-91 the department focused its capital budget on upgrading park facilities and resources and completing Forest Fire Management initiatives.

Capital expenditures in 1990-91 were approximately $3.9 million.

Park facility improvements included:

- replacement of various facilities, including picnic tables, barbecues, toilets and boat docks;
- improvements to water systems in Meadow Lake and Lac La Ronge provincial parks and golf course irrigation at Moose Mountain Provincial Park;
- renovations to campground service centres at Candle Lake, Duck Mountain and Meadow Lake provincial parks and the recreation hall at Good Spirit Lake and bath changehouse at Pike Lake;
- redevelopment of the Greenwater Lake Provincial Park marina;
- improvements to the campgrounds at Anglin Lake and Etter's Beach recreation sites and at Lac La Ronge, Candle Lake and Good Spirit Lake provincial parks;
- road resurfacing at Cypress Hills and Good Spirit Lake provincial parks;
- new park visitor centres at Saskatchewan Landing and Fort Carlton provincial parks; and
- renovations to staff residences.

The department spent more than $100,000 on reforestation, removal of overmature trees from activity areas and rehabilitation of abandoned oil well sites and seismic lines in parks.

The forest fire management centre and depot at Prince Albert was completed and helicopter fueling systems were purchased for Hudson Bay and Nipawin provincial parks.

Water Development and Monitoring Program

Contract Services administers the Water Development and Monitoring Program to provide an adequate supply of good quality water for provincial parks, recreation sites and other department facilities, including the fish culture station, fire control centres and staff residences.

During the year the branch accomplished the following:

- tested more than 200 water sources for 75 different parameters;
- drilled four new wells and serviced 22 existing wells;
- undertook detailed water consumption studies at Moose Mountain and Greenwater Lake provincial parks and at the Fort Qu'Appelle Fish Culture Station; and
- prepared a preliminary design for water treatment plant upgrading at Greenwater Lake Provincial Park.

Environmental Protection Initiatives

The branch co-ordinated the design and licensing of sewage treatment facilities, refuse disposal facilities and hazardous substances storage sites to meet environmental regulations. In addition it inventoried 84 fuel storage sites requiring upgrading and received approval from Saskatchewan Environment and Public Safety for one new refuse disposal site and one new sewage lagoon.

Commercial Operations

During the year, the department managed 97 commercial lease agreements for 121 different facilities operated by the private sector in the park system. Facilities include accommodations, golf courses, miniature golf, boat rentals, fast food services, stores and riding stables. Lease fee revenue for 1990-91 amounted to $350,000.

In 1990-91, the private sector established four new or improved services or facilities in the park system. Proposals during the year for new or improved facilities included an upgraded golf course, clubhouse, accommodation and convention facilities in The Battlefords Provincial Park and a cottage subdivision at Saskatchewan Landing Provincial Park.

Extensive use of computer-aided graphics and hardware enhance Contract Services' drafting capabilities.

Human Resources

Human Resources Branch provides personnel services to department employees, including staffing, employment fairness support, classification, organization design, employee relations, employee recognition and occupational health and safety programs. Staff development and training is another important function, as is personnel records management.

Personnel Services

During the year, Human Resources Branch provided services to staff of the departments of Parks and Renewable Resources and Family Foundation, as well as the Saskatchewan Arts Board and Saskatchewan Centre of the Arts. In addition to supplying support services, such as staffing, classification, benefits administration and employee relations, the branch also co-ordinated the Summer Student, Co-op Student, Seasonal Staffing and Long Service Recognition programs.

Day-to-day support services were extremely busy with just over 2,000 separate employee counselling sessions, 123 classification actions and 437 staffing actions. The establishment of an internal committee to oversee the implementation of the proposed new in-scope classification plan marked another accomplishment.

Staff Development

Staff development activities resulted in almost 2,600 person-days used for in-house and Public Service Commission workshops, technical training for conservation officers and forest fire management personnel, computer training and safety training.

The Investment in Excellence Program continued with positive results. It was presented to more than 200 supervisory and professional employees.

An organization development strategy was developed to better respond to changing employee and organization needs in the workplace of the 1990s. New programs developed and delivered during the year included the Employee Innovation and Recognition Program, which resulted in 31 awards and 29 employee suggestions, the New Employee Orientation Program and the Employee Wellness Program.

Employment Fairness

Employment Fairness activities continued to be a department priority. The branch, in co-operation with a department-wide committee, published a brochure outlining employment fairness and drafted a policy demonstrating commitment to such activities.

Increased cross-cultural training courses for conservation officers was an important initiative of the Enforcement Training Unit.

Occupational Health and Safety

In the department's continuing efforts to ensure a safe working environment, the role of the branch and regional safety co-ordinators was refined to ensure more direct involvement in local safety matters, and the department's 47 Occupational Health and Safety Committees took on a more proactive role. The Safety Award Program continued to be successful, as shown by the 915 employees who were awarded a one-year, accident-free pin.

Management Services

Management Services Branch provides diverse technical and professional administrative and system services to the department in the form of accounts and payroll administration, revenue collection, grants administration, financial planning and management, corporate planning, internal auditing, property management and computer systems.

Internal Administration

Management Services Branch undertook several projects aimed at making the department run more effectively and efficiently. Some of the activities undertaken by the branch in 1990-91 include:

- co-ordinating the 1991-92 Budget and Corporate Plan;
- initiating and supporting the Financial Management Project;
- installing a local area network for Forest Fire Management to allow for future expansion of the Intelligent Fire Management Information System;
- establishing electronic mail in Regina and Prince Albert and inclusion of LAN-to-LAN communication between the two cities;
- facilitating/delivering 750 student-days of computer related training in Regina and Prince Albert;
- providing support to 106 systems and in excess of 300 microcomputers in the department;
- issuing in excess of 3,500 payroll cheques monthly, during the peak summer season;
- processing over 50,000 invoices and 1,900 dental forms in 1990-91;
- implementing the Licence Information Processing System for improved control of licence vendors and their accounts;
- preparing an internal policy on accounts receivables for better management controls and collecting-reporting processes;
- making financial and administrative changes to the Sask Works Program to eliminate audit concerns and provide better co-ordination and communications with communities;
- co-ordinating audits of park lessees;
- conducting audits on the forest fire operations for the four northern regional offices and Forest Fire Management Branch;
- conducting a detailed audit of the accounting aspects of the Enforcement Unit;
- managing the Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation (SPMC) Accommodation inventory which contains 727 buildings and represents annual rental charges in excess of $7.5 million; and
- overseeing the largest full maintenance fleet of Central Vehicle Agency (CVA) vehicles in the province (510).

The branch processed total revenues of $28,050,642 and total expenditures of $149,916,443, including revolving funds and development funds.

Communications Services

Communications Services Branch provides effective public communications and promotion of the department's programs, policies and events. Media relations, advertising, display production, graphic art, photography, writing, employee communications and library management are among the services the branch provides.

Wildlife Communications

Communications activities designed to support wildlife management and conservation programs included:

- co-ordinating the Wildlife Co-operator Awards;
- planning revisions to the Resource Reader;
- publishing the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund Annual Report;
- preparing the 1990 Hunting and Trapping Guide;
- serving on the communications committee for the Canada-Saskatchewan Agreement on Soil Conservation; and
- co-ordinating the "Don't Shoot Cow Moose" campaign, and

Fisheries Communications

To support Fisheries Branch and its programs, communications activities included:

- co-ordinating the Fisheries Strategies news conference and Fisheries Advisory Board dinner;
- co-ordinating media interviews for fisheries biologists on the release of bugs to counteract leafy spurge, a noxious weed spreading throughout wetlands;
- organizing the official opening of the Qu'Appelle Walleye Nursery;
- preparing the 1990 Anglers' Guide;
- planning and co-ordinating the Free Fishing Day event held in conjunction with Parks Day at Cypress Hills Provincial Park on June 9; and
- publishing the Fish Allocation White Paper.

Parks Communications

Promotion of provincial parks and recreation sites during the year made Saskatchewan residents aware of the many services, facilities and interpretive activities offered in the parks system. Communications programs included:

- developing and implementing a multi-media advertising campaign to promote Saskatchewan parks, with the theme "Saskatchewan Parks - Your Place Under the Sun";
- producing and distributing the Parkspirit brochure, which outlines private sector park outdoor adventures and vacation packages;
- organizing the news conference and social to announce the Parks System Plan;
- co-ordinating the official opening of the new Fort Carlton Visitor Centre and plaque unveilings at Holy Trinity Anglican Church and Stanley Mission historic sites; and
- co-ordinating the Saskatchewan Express tour of four provincial parks, attended by more than 3,000 people.

Forestry Communications

The department increased public awareness about the value of Saskatchewan's forests during the year with a number of communications activities that included:

- completing a five-year communications strategy for the new Forestry Partnership Agreement, in conjunction with Forestry Canada;
- undertaking a communications plan for the Forest Habitat Management Program;
- organizing the launch of TREEmendous by the premier, a program that promotes tree planting;
- organizing a media tour of the Dutch Elm Disease tree removal site in Estevan; and
- co-ordinating the official opening of the Nisbet Forest Fire Management Complex in Prince Albert.

Operations Communications

To support Operations Division and its activities, communications programs included:

- a two-phase, multi-media forest fire prevention campaign comprising radio, television and print advertising, a direct mail project and promotional appearances by Smokey Bear at schools, provincial parks, campgrounds, special events and summer schools; and
- the Turn in Poachers (TIP) campaign, featuring advertisements in wildlife-related magazines, public service announcements, displays and promotional items.

Financial Statement (Audited)

Receipts	1989/90	1990/91
Fisheries	$2,905,933	$2,855,406
Wildlife	4,589,280	4,737,604
Lands	173,253	448,725
Forestry	4,733,268	3,321,793
Miscellaneous	2,764,216	2,190,164
Total	**15,165,950**	**13,553,692**

Disbursements		
Ordinary	$111,836,181	$86,660,644
Capital	1,698,165	1,435,000
Total	**113,534,346**	**88,095,644**

Tables

Table 1 Natural Environment, Recreation and Wilderness Provincial Parks: Historical Number of Visitors (Victoria Day to Labour Day Weekend), 1981 - 1990

Location	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Natural Environment										
Cypress Hills	233,733	224,907	220,206	187,758	148,371	182,034	151,989	137,653	178,362	160,147
Douglas	70,875	71,718	63,651	67,593	64,365	45,039	30,522	38,562	44,874	32,646
Duck Mountain	218,094	255,366	303,816	243,996	242,643	235,281	247,116	261,291	265,515	169,934
Good Spirit Lake	94,704	101,289	94,728	110,013	105,432	115,770	105,450	137,406	155,946	99,555
Greenwater Lake	106,200	106,500	106,800	104,172	108,306	120,246	120,753	145,272	127,983	118,,55
Lac La Ronge	n/a	15,180	57,537	132,804	128,346	92,400	96,921	94,461	84,590	49,191*
Makwa Lake	312,741	365,847	259,365	305,418	110,175	103,671	112,761	97,431	109,443	40,408
Meadow Lake	331,098	236,205	226,605	237,462	249,669	239,115	266,640	260,232	306,954	191,075
Moose Mountain	450,273	431,043	392,571	440,313	418,800	516,966	534,171	596,766	595,203	226,382
Nipawin	104,805	52,686	37,131	37,494	41,910	26,355	21,567	39,891	66,828	19,537*
Saskatchewan Landing	171,429	135,126	159,759	153,141	162,456	172,320	181,533	238,023	154,545	67,074
Sub-Total	**2,093,952**	**1,995,867**	**1,922,169**	**2,020,164**	**1,780,473**	**1,849,197**	**1,869,423**	**2,046,988**	**2,190,243**	**1,174,904**
Recreation										
The Battlefords	158,571	174,492	195,843	171,447	233,985	198,594	166,737	151,626	179,898	140,744
Blackstrap	55,626	53,673	49,224	47,496	43,707	43,206	59,121	82,392	55,656	32,980
Buffalo Pound	133,419	122,919	99,417	111,855	87,576	97,200	83,109	103,998	76,365	85,949
Candle Lake	656,814	712,608	413,007	217,224	147,774	170,091	328,500	125,766	198,123	54,791
Crooked Lake	34,920	47,877	40,086	72,486	41,463	36,138	33,651	42,213	32,604	6,460*
Danielson	107,556	119,076	98,697	108,144	90,987	38,968	78,351	95,727	71,079	5,047*
Echo Valley	279,486	158,820	163,506	200,877	170,031	70,770	144,354	177,885	178,278	89,820
Katepwa Point	19,908	44,148	33,693	41,844	29,913	26,940	48,816	35,352	41,685	76,557**
Pike Lake	141,315	126,717	115,326	96,573	99,873	145,308	111,474	147,492	159,438	153,826
Rowan's Ravine	81,585	120,186	80,025	79,671	67,893	40,860	54,369	58,095	97,644	50,136
Sub-Total	**1,669,200**	**1,680,516**	**1,288,824**	**1,147,617**	**1,013,202**	**918,075**	**1,108,482**	**1,020,546**	**1,090,770**	**696,310**
Wilderness										
Clearwater	-	-	-	-	-	-	339	672	4,014	-
Total (22)	**3,763,152**	**3,676,383**	**3,210,993**	**3,167,781**	**2,793,675**	**2,767,272**	**2,978,244**	**3,068,206**	**3,285,027**	**1,871,214**

Footnotes

1981 - 1989 visitor data have been derived from monthly traffic counter figures multiplied by a factor of 3 persons per vehicle (1982 Park Visitor Survey and 1990 Park Entry Gate Survey).

The 1990 visitation figures have been derived from a permit based system and are more accurate than the previous "traffic counter" numbers. The new "permit system" is based on actual sales of entry and camping permits and an estimate of cottage use.

Analysis has shown that the traffic counter system generally tended to over estimate the number of visitors but was also subject to mechanical failure and other inaccuracies which varied markedly from year to year.

It is estimated that overall park visitation increased by about 1.0 % between 1989 and 1990.

* Does not include day use

** Traffic counter figure multiplied by a factor of three (no permits sold at this location)

Table 2 Forestry Employment, 1990/91

Direct Employment		Person Years
Woodlands	Office	105
	Plant or Mill	1,733
	Company	107
	Contract	710
Total Direct Employment		**2,655**
Indirect Employment		**4,221**
Total Employment		**6,876**

Table 3 Value of Primary Forest Products

Product	Volume Used m^3	Value $/m^3$ 1990/91	Total Value 1990/91 $ (000)	Total Value 1989/90 $ (000)
Sawtimber	1,064,717	40	42,589	50,753
Posts	45,729	194	8,871	19,917
Poles	272	36	9	1,428
Rails	6,065	78	473	1,076
Ties	142	237	34	1,517
Piling & Round Timber	2,664	48	128	47
Fuelwood	97,509	16	1,560	1,245
Waferboard, Plywood & Pulp	1,383,872	122	169,066	290,173
Total	**2,600,970**		**222,730**	**366,156**

Table 4 Provincial Forest Fire Summary*

Cause	No. of Fires	Total % of Fires	Area Burned (ha)	% of Total Area Burned
Recreation	173	22.0	411.7	0.6
Resident	152	19.3	31,617.0	46.0
Forest Industry	5	0.6	4.1	---
Railroad	2	0.3	2.6	---
Other Industry	7	0.9	0.2	---
Incendiary	45	5.7	504.5	0.7
Miscellaneous	41	5.2	52.0	0.1
Lightning	351	44.7	36,192.7	52.6
Unknown	10	1.3	0.1	---
Total	**786**	**100.0**	**68,784.9**	**100.0**

* Primary Protection Zone only
Source: FFMB

Table 5 Forest Revenue (from Provincial Forests and Provincial Lands) from April 1/88 to March 31/89

Dues, Fees and Royalties		Dollars	Dollars
Pulpwood:	Weyerhaeuser	967,420.35	
	Simpson Timber	3,083.00	
	Other Operators	40,834.11	1,011,317.46
Sawtimber:	L & M Wood Products	73,684.89	
	NorSask	193,972.00	
	Sask. Forest Products	1,276,752.70	
	Simpson Timber	399,508.00	
	Other Operators	75,173.14	2,019,090.73
Other products:	Lehner Wood Preservers	20,267.45	
	MacMillan Bloedel	30,530.12	
	Other Operators	101,687.93	152,485.50
Total Dues, Fees and Royalties			**3,182,893.69**
	Licences and Permits[1]	85,367.42	
	Penalties and Interest[2]	20,428.50	
	Sales and Services[3]	10,271.88	
	Other Charges and Levies[4]	24,957.24	141,025.04
Grand Total For Forests			**3,323,918.73**

1 Includes sawmill licences, Forest Management Licence, grazing, timber, hay, wild rice, peat and sphagnum moss permits.
2 Includes waste of merchantable timber, overcut timber dues, timber seizure sales, overcut hay dues, hay seizure sales.
3 Includes timber sales and other services.
4 Includes fire prevention levy and ground rent charges.

Table 6 Tree Planting and Scarification, 1990/91

	Location	# Trees	Hectares
SPRR Forestry Branch	Holbein	813,250	274
	Brocklebank	242,200	182
	Geize East	539,900	438
	Geize West	564,950	428
	Sipanok East	500,800	362
	Sipanok West	514,760	342
	Fort a la Corne	490,000	173
	Cypress Hills	265,806	119
Government Total		**3,931,666**	**2,318**
Industry	Weyerhaeuser	4,435,349	2,171
	NorSask	1,736,527	786
Industry Total		**6,171,876**	**2,957**
Total Plantings		**10,103,542**	**5,275**
Total Scarification			**1,401**
Total Area Treated			**6,676**
Tended			**1,171**

Table 7 Depletion by Region

Region	By use m^3	By Fire m^3
Hudson Bay	691,058	1,713
Prince Albert	1,381,297	141,131
Meadow Lake	406,109	1,687,333
La Ronge	104,221	31,616
Melville	2,423	0
Saskatoon	349	0
Regina	375	0
Swift Current	15,100	0
Total	**2,600,932**	**1,861,793**

Table 8 Big Game Harvest and Recreation Days by Species, 1990*

	Harvest	Rec. Days
White-tailed Deer	33,146	82,419
Moose	3,144	56,904
Elk	1,074	21,516
Mule Deer	12,096	28,940
Antelope	4,920	10,876
Woodland Caribou**	0	0
Black Bear	850	10,870
Barren-ground Caribou	0	0

** Season closed in 1990 * Preliminary results

Table 9 Fish and Wildlife Development Fund, 1990/91

	Fish Enhancement	Wildlife Develoment	Total
Opening Fund Balance	539,883	2,373,865	2,913,748
Revenues	888,453	1,808,651	2,697,104
Expenditures	1,018,705	1,895,318	2,914,023
Excess of Revenues over Expenditures	(130,252)	(86,667)	(216,919)
Ending Fund Balance	**409,631**	**2,287,198**	**2,696,829**

Please note that these are "Audited Financial Figures".

Table 10 Game Bird Harvest and Recreation Days by Species, 1990*

	Harvest	Rec. Days
Ducks	115,937	129,495 (includes
Geese	161,686	both Ducks & Geese)
Sandhill Crane	3,822	14,680
Sharp-tailed Grouse	53,014	24,585
Hungarian Partridge	69,209	34,511
Ruffed Grouse	26,697	7,201
Spruce Grouse	4,030	3,573
Pheasant	10,722	8,330

*Preliminary results

Table 11 Commercial Fish Production, 1990/91

Species	Kilograms
Whitefish	943,136
Walleye	504,799
Pike	591,240
Trout	266,892
Other	327,998
Total	**2,634,065**

Table 12 Hunting and Trapping Licence Sales and Revenues

	Number	Revenue
Wildlife Habitat Certificate	67,165	645,035
Game Bird		
Saskatchewan Resident Game Bird	26,827	255,353
Canadian Resident Game Bird	1,619	82,244
Non-resident Game Bird	3,280	357,582
Total Game Bird	**31,726**	**695,179**
Big Game		
1st Saskatchewan Resident Barren-ground Caribou	15	420
2nd Saskatchewan Resident Barren-ground Caribou	12	280
Saskatchewan Resident Bear	2,539	37,815
Canadian Resident Bear	75	4,644
Non-Resident Bear	776	80,556
1st Saskatchewan Resident White-tailed Deer	39,608	1,219,874
2nd Saskatchewan Resident White-tailed Deer	7,143	222,202
1st Canadian Resident White-tailed Deer	674	87,943
2nd Canadian Resident White-tailed Deer	67	8,339
1st Non-Resident White-tailed Deer	908	228,966
2nd Non-Resident White-tailed Deer	290	74,522
Saskatchewan Antlerless White-tailed Deer	2,200	65,767
Saskatchewan Resident Regular Elk	2,735	85,696
Saskatchewan Resident Archery Elk	231	6,930
Saskatchewan Resident Regular Moose	9,240	284,508
Canadian Resident Guided Moose	8	1,200
Non-Resident Guided Moose	241	71,700
Big Game Draw		
Special Elk	1,761	87,900
Special Moose Computer Draw	2,077	103,600
Special Moose Archery	41	2,050
Antelope	6,429	215,845
Antelope Archery	331	11,585
Either-Sex Mule Deer	6,589	229,705
Either-Sex Mule Deer Archery	1,078	37,730
Antlerless Mule Deer	6,144	230,675
Antlerless Mule Deer Archery	73	2,150
Muzzleloading Either-Sex Mule Deer	479	16,765
Muzzleloading Antlerless Mule Deer	222	7,770
Total Big Game	**91,986**	**3,427,137**
Trapping		
South Saskatchewan Fur	1,960	19,610
North Saskatchewan Fur	2,605	90,429
Total Trapping	**4,565**	**110,039**
Total Receipts, Game and Fur Licences	**195,442**	**4,877,390**

Table 13 Fisheries Licence Sales, 1990/91

		Number Sold	Dollar Revenue
Sport	Resident	143,673	$2,138,653
	Non-Resident	18,505	599,061
	One Day	2,062	17,555
Total		**164,240**	**$2,755,269**
Commercial	Fish Processing Plant	9	225
	Commercial Net	1,635	23,656
	Brine Shrimp	9	180
	Bait Fish	88	1,465
Fish Farm	Commercial	107	1,740
	Private	2,361	---
	Fur Farm	2	212
Total		**4,211**	**27,478**
Domestic			
Domestic Net		**802**	**4,066**

Table 14 Summary of Fish Stocking, 1990/91

Species		Number Stocked	Number of Waters Stocked
Walleye	Fry	29,082,900	58
	Fry (Rearing Pond Production)	2,633,430	15
	Fingerlings	736,933	19
	Adults	102	1
Brook Trout	Fingerlings	136,368	41
	Catchables	294	1
Cutthroat Trout	Fingerlings	14,387	2
Brown Trout	Fingerlings	37,365	13
	Catchables	318	5
Rainbow Trout	Eyed Eggs	38,500	1
	Fry	139,900	2
	Fingerlings	429,648	79
	Catchables	10,324	11
Splake	Adults	24	1
Perch	Fingerlings	8,080	9
Tiger Trout	Fingerlings	1,147	1
Northern Pike	Fingerlings	77,000	3
Total		**33,346,720**	**262**